

Dear members of the Education Committee:

My name is Christian Mendoza. I am currently a resident of Shelton, a lifetime resident of Connecticut and am in support of H.B. 6663 An Act Establishing the English Learners Bill of Rights.

Currently, there are more than 45,000 English Language Learners (ELL) in Connecticut, but ELL performance is significantly lower across the board. Due to the lack of qualified interpreters/interpretation resources, parents cannot be informed about their child's progress in school.

As a child of immigrant parents and someone who has spent more than a decade working with immigrant families in individuals throughout the state, I know firsthand how important ELL education is to children and their parents, and the long-lasting impact these programs and support can have on those children, and therefore their community as a whole. Moreover, I wholeheartedly believe that those programs and access to them mean little if students and parents do not know that those resources are available to them, and what their rights are in accessing them, which is why a bill of rights is necessary.

Access to quality education is a right all children should have regardless of the language they speak. Clear rights help our community know where they can turn for support and guidance.

By guaranteeing parental rights in ELL students' education, children will improve in school; parents will be able to advocate for their child's needs and ensure they receive the best education.

I am for H.B. 6663 An Act Establishing the English Learner Bill of Rights.

Thank you for your attention,

Christian Mendoza